

A General Epistle

TO FRIENDS

Every Where.

Written in obedience to the Requirings of the Spirit of
Life from God.

Some of the things spoken to in this Epistle.

God's peculiar Love and Favour manifested to the People of God
With a Salutation to them.

The manner of Gods bringing of us out of spiritual Sodom and Ægypt,
and his end therein.

Something of the old Serpents subtilty and cunning working; with a way
opened for all (how to escape it) that are convinced of the Truth.

Some wholsom Exhortations unto all who are come to the Way of God,
to continue stedfast in it, and to be constant in their Obedience to
Christ Jesus unto the end. With something by way of Advice, to be-
ware of the Whores Cup, and that ye receive not the Beasts Mark on
your Foreheads, or in your Hands. Also, concerning mighty things
done by Faith. A few words concerning Marriage: And several
other things relating to Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children,
Mistres and Servants.

A friendly Caution to all such who have transported, or may transport
themselves beyond the Seas into forreign Plantations.

Dear Friends and Brethren;

Who are the called of God in Christ Jesus, and wit-
ness the hope of your calling out of Darknes into
his marvellous Light, and are the Children of
the Light and of the Day, The dear and tender Salutation of my
Love, in the Light, Life and Spirit of God, reacheth to you all,
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with fresh and fervent desires, that you all may be kept faithful unto him who hath called, and also made choice of you to serve, worship, love and obey him in your generation, that you may be called the Trees of Righteousness, of the Lords planting, his Seed taking deep Root in you, you will all bring forth fruit to the honour and glory of him who hath not only planted, but often also watered you with his heavenly dew & showers of plentiful Rain, which purely and refreshingly hath fallen down upon you, as no People else hath witnessed the like in our age or generation, nor hath been known since the Apostles days, glory to the Lord God of Heaven and Earth, he hath made many Trees fruitful, that now remain as lively, fresh and green as ever, altho some are not only withered, but dead twice and pluckt up by the Root, that were planted, and have been watered with us often by our heavenly Father, the Husband-man both to us and them, who did sow the same good Seed in them Grounds that prove evil, as on that which is good Ground; and that which he plants or sows in any mans heart is good, and shews man what is purely good, and of God, from that which is contrary, that all might come to love the good, and hate the evil, as its manifest from God by his immortal Seed or Word of Life within, and that all might chuse the good and refuse the evil, as either appear, or is represented to any particular; all are to love the good, and hate the evil; to chuse the good, and refuse the evil; to joyn to, and be one with the good, but to separate from, reject and deny that which is evil; and the pure Light of Christ in every Conscience (as all take heed thereunto, and wait therein) will let them see, and know how to distinguish betwixt good and evil, under what disguise, fair pretence or transformation of the Enemy soever it may appear, to blind, beguile or deceive the simple, either to keep in the evil always from the good, or to lead out and draw from the good, after tastes of it, into the evil again, to make the latter end of such worse than their beginning. I say, and testifie in the Lord, *dear Friends*, as we all keep in, and mind the glorious Light of the Son of God, no such Darknes will ever again come over any of us, as to call *good evil*, or *evil good*, to put *light for darknes*, and *darknes for light*, *sweet for bitter*, or *bitter for sweet*; for that cometh of Darknes, from the Prince of Darknes, and God of this World; even the blindness that some are in

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who profess the *light*, yet put *darkness* for it, and call *good evil*, and *evil good*; and how can such know the good and acceptable will of God, or good from evil? then they were not like to chuse the good, and refuse the evil: And how were they like to obey the Light of Christ, or walk in it, that cannot clearly or truly distinguish betwixt *Light* and *Darkness*, *Christ* or *Belial*? May not such follow *darkness* instead of *light*, and *Belial* instead of *Christ*? nay, do they not walk in *darkness*, not knowing whither they walk, whose Minds thus are blinded by *darkness*? And such, to the *Children of the Light*, and of the *Day*, may be known by this Character, that though they profess the Light of Christ, and have been convinced by it, yet they hate it, and will not bring their deeds to it, to be proved and tryed; this Prover and Tryer that judgeth and condemns for sin and evil they cannot abide the coming of, but would have their works and things tryed and proved by the *Darkness* which they themselves are in. Which, *dear Friends*, I tenderly beseech you in the love of God to beware of, and dwell in the Light of the Son of God forever; mind it, love and believe in it as much as ever you did since you turned to it, and came to believe in it, then I know you will be as willing to bring your deeds to it as ever you were, and will be as ready to embrace and follow the motions of it, as you were at your first Convincement, or the Candle of the Lord first shined upon your Tabernacles: And I doubt not but a Remnant are so at this day, although some are already turned aside from the Light into great *Darkness*, and lost the sense of Life, having Death over them, and they feed thereon, being out of the green and fresh Pastures of Life, where once they fed with us gladly, and accounted them good and precious, which now seems but to them as the Manna did to the Children of *Israel*, when they had eaten thereof and were full, how did many of them forget the Lord and his works, and murmured against *Moses* that was faithful in God's house, and said, *Hath he brought us hither to destroy us?* And they said, *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness?* which was also a questioning of Gods Power and Providence; All which were the fruits and evil effects of Unbelief, and their revolting and backsliding Hearts; and the Lord said, *Israel hath cast off the thing that is good*; he saw it, was angry and greatly displeased

displeased therewith ; and the Lord did forsake them, and cast them off, because they did forsake him, and cast off the thing that was good, and followed after that which evil, and often did evil in the sight of the Lord ; and many ways God proved them, and tryed them, and did mighty things for them, for his Names sake, and for *Israels* sake he cut *Rahab*, & wounded the Dragon, & divided and made a way in the Sea, a good and safe Passage for them in the Journey which the Lord led them on in ; he carried them on Eagles Wings, and rebuked Kings, and subdued strong Nations before them ; but when they rebelled, then he turned to be their Enemy, and fought against them whom he had often saved, and had been afflicted with them in their Afflictions.

So, *dear Friends*, you that are gathered to God by his gathering Arm of Love and Power, keep with the Lord, and forsake him not whatsoever you may suffer for his Names sake therein ; the Lord will appear to your joy, and will afflict them that afflict you for your obedience to God, and the keeping your Consciences pure and good in his sight : Let not a revolting or rebellious Heart be found in any one of you, such cannot continue or abide with the Lord whose hearts are evil and rebellious, out of them cometh not good things, their hearts are defiled with evil, filled with it, and bent to do wickedly, and they cannot cease from sin. And how hath the Devil loaded some with Iniquity, that do yet profess the same Light and Way of God with us ? How do they manifestly appear Children that are corrupters or corrupt Children, endeavouring to corrupt the Minds of the Professors, and other People, by the seeds of Corruption which they have sown and printed for them to feed upon ; and its the evil Seeds-man that sows corrupt or evil Seed : What Instruments soever are by him made use of in that work, mark them, and avoid them as Instruments of Unrighteousness.

Oh *Friends* ! as you love your eternal Rest and Peace with God, watch against, and shut out the seed of the Serpent, and his evil Seeds-men that sow it abroad ; by the Light of the Lord which shines in your hearts (and hath given you the knowledge of God) you may discern and see clearly the old Serpent's cunning in his Agents, what high swelling words soever, in their vain minds they may come with amongst you, or print for Food to the uncircumcised

circumcised, and the unclean. Be ye stedfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord, unto which you are called of God; be not beguiled any one of you by the Serpent's cunning; wait low in the pure Simplicity, and that will give knowledge and understanding of the wiles and cunning working of the creeping Serpent. And now is the seed of God risen to break the head of the Serpent, and to tread under foot his power and authority, which he hath got in man and woman by disobedience, and their rebellion against God, whereby man in the beginning was subjected to vanity, and not willing, but by a false hope the Devil had begotten in them, which was the cause of their being beguiled, the begetting of that false hope, *that they should be as Gods, knowing good and evil*, and as if they should not dye, notwithstanding their transgressing the Command of the Lord, which the Serpent's deceitful and beguiling Doctrine subjected them into the belief of. Therefore take heed that none of you be beguiled as the Serpent beguiled *Eve*, and draw you from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus. It seems the Believers which the Apostle writ to had a godly simplicity and stedfastness in the Truth of God, but afterward were in some danger to be drawn from it; but *Eve* had not been so beguiled if she had minded to keep Gods command & counsel, and not hearkned to the Serpent. So hearken not to the doctrine or voice of the Serpent, which leads from God, into Transgression and to death, from the Life of God, and to lose the Image of God, which *Adam* and *Eve* were deprived of, though once beautified therewith: And so Gods Image may be lost now by them that are come into it, and have born it, and the beauty of Holiness that any one had, may be lost, if there be not a keeping in that Power which brings into it, and preserves the faithful in it. The heavenly Creator in the new Creation, createth us in Christ Jesus unto good works, and he restores his People to God in his Image, which is after God in Righteousness and true Holiness; so we become holy as the Lord our God is holy, and perfect as our heavenly Father is Perfect; and so we are *a chosen Generation and a royal Priesthood to God*, and are prepared of him to offer an Offering acceptable and well-pleasing in the sight of God, and come to know how to please God in all things, and to hearken to his voice, and obey his Voice, that is better than Sacrifice or the fat

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of Rams, which some content themselves with, even a bare Profession of the Truth and Knowledge of, but do not obey it nor walk in it, but rather cause the way of Truth to be evil spoken of, opening the Mouthes of Adversaries to blaspheme that holy Name by which we were called, and who know the Truth, but act contrary to the guidance of that Spirit of Truth which led them into the Truth, and the Way wherein they should go, and so go into the Apostacy, and to turn back again into *Egypt*, which all ought to beware of; for we were not brought out of the Apostacy or delivered out of *Egypt* either to look, back or go back again. Did not the Lord by a very mighty hand, & stretched out Arm bring us out of *Egypt* spiritually, as really as he did the Children of *Israel* out of outward *Egypt* in the days of old? And how did God wound and overthrow our Enemies (though strong and potent) not by any might or power carnal, but by his own holy Spirit and Power, which he made known in our hearts, and which we received from him? Hath not this conquered and overcome many of your Enemies that oppressed you, which you groaned under, and were sorrowful because of, till deliverance came? And cannot many of you say, that the right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass, and that the right hand of the Lord hath done valiantly? And cannot you say, the Lord was on your side, and now is the same; and that greater is he that is in you than he that is in the World? Although, *dear Friends*, you have many Enemies yet to encounter with, fear not, neither be at all dismayed, only look to the Lord, and believe in him, and love and trust in him; fear not man, nor put no trust in Princes, nor in any Arm of flesh; and if the wicked bend their Bow, and shoot their Arrows at you who are innocent in your Minds, and of a peaceable Life, matter it not, but look to the Lord, that Innocency and a peaceable Mind still may be found in you all; leave your cause to the Lord to plead, who in his own due time will plead your cause, & execute judgment for you; the Lord can if he please, soon break the Bow of the Wicked, and turn their Arrows against themselves, and make all their Weapons they form against you, unprosperous, and cut off their expectation that seek your Ruin and Destruction: And as Innocency is found in you, and you preserved in a godly and peaceable life, you will
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never envy them that oppress you, nor chuse any of their ways, but will mind Gods good old *Way, Truth and Life*, and will not walk in the way of the Wicked Ungodly men, nor sit in the seat of the Scornful, Proud and Arogant, which leads to Death and Destruction ; if you see many in that way, let not that be an occasion for you to stumble at, or to forsake the way of the Lord, which is narrow, and leads to Life, Peace and Rest that is Everlasting, wherein you have learned to trust in the Lord, & to stand resign'd up to his will in the most perilous times, when they come; and wherein you have learned to love the Lord and one another with that *love* which is shed abroad from *God* in your hearts, and is unfeigned, in which *dear Friends* forever dwell ; and shut out all Deceit, Hypocrisie and Dissimulation, which doth render them black amongst us that have not put away, or are not purged from such things, and so doth Envy, Wrath or Malice where-ever it is, which is all for the fire, and to be purged away, that you may pray in the Spirit of the living God, by which you were all quickened ; quench it not, neither grieve it, nor rebel against it ; for that hinders the heavenly joy and comforts of the Spirit, when Tribulation ariseth because of the Word. Let not any of you be found without true joy and comfort, when you may have need enough of it, and behold many weeping and wailing for want of it ; for certainly it will be woful and miserable for that man or woman that is without the comfort and joy of the holy Spirit, when no comfort and lasting joy will be found in any visible created thing, which this World can afford ; mens hearts already begin to be astonished, and to fail them for fear, because of the things that are coming to pass ; for not only the Powers of the Earth, but the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken.

Friends, let not any of you be found an evil or sloathful Servant, that shall say in his Heart, *My Lord delays his coming* ; and so put his Day afar off, to let Night again over you ; You may remember what Sorrow and Heaviness we endured when we were Children of the Night, and covered with thick Darkness, and what Joy came in the Morning of Gods glorious Day, as it dawned in our Hearts ; did not many then sing for Joy of Heart, and experimentally could say, *The singing of Birds was come* ? But the evil and sloathful Servant that saith in his Heart,
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My Lord delays his coming, cannot sing out of any sence of heavenly Joy in his Heart, and therefore frets and smites his fellow Servant, and eats and drinks with the Drunken, such become the Companions of the evil and sloathful Servant, he delights not to be a Companion to them that fear the Lord, and are diligent in his Work; nor will not say to the workers of Iniquity, *Depart from me, I will keep the Commandments of my God;* but rather joyns with the workers of Iniquity, and is one with them in breaking the Commands of God, and rebelling against him; and its just with the Lord to suffer Night to come over such again, that have been called to serve the Lord in his House, but are evil and sloathful Servants; not good, not diligent, nor watchful, but are found bad, negligent and unwatchful, and unsensible of God's presence, and the coming of the Lord, which draweth nigh: Oh! keep in the Spirit and Power of the Lord God, and that will preserve you all fervent in love to him, and one another, and diligent in the Lord's work whereunto you are all called with a holy calling, to watch & war against the Devil; and whatsoever is of him, let it have no place in you, nor let not the Devil ever enter your Hearts any more, and if he do, not to dwell there, but feel you the Arm and Power of the Lord to cast him out, & keep him out, that he may never work in you any more, nor have any Lordship or Rule in you, or over you, then I am sure you will be ready in Heart and Mind to follow that which is good; and resist the Devil, and all his badness which is so beloved of the World, and then you will be prepared to avoid every appearance of Evil, and will give no place to it, but will keep faithful to God over it, and then you will be made capable *in the Spirit of Love, and a sound Mind,* to reprove such as are light, vain, and of a loose behaviour, and shun the Cross of Christ; & not indulge that Nature & Spirit that keeps some high and unsubjected, and in disobedience to the Lord God; and for this cause some are weak and sick amongst us, and some fallen asleep; had they but taken up the daily Cross, and kept therein, there would never have appeared that Self love, Weakness, Sickness and Sleepiness, that is in some that are amongst us, that would be accounted wife Virgins, and indeed have come long enough among us to have been found such at this

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day, but are not, but are weak as in the time of their first Convincement, and as if they had not waited upon the Lord with us; they so faint, and have so little strength to stand in the day of Tryal, or hour of Temptation, that it appears their strength is but small. I say in the Lord, if they that now faint in the time of Adversity, had waited upon the Lord in diligence and sincerity of Heart, doubtless they would have had more strength, and received more Power from God than they enjoy or feel, and would have grown more in the Grace and Knowledge of God than they have done, and would not have been so sick at their Stomachs as some are, that they cannot digest wholsom Food, but slight and dis-esteem it, whereby some Members suffer; and indeed it hurts the whole Body, when any of the Members thereof suffer, especially as the Apostle said then, *when many were Weak and Sick amongst them, and some fallen asleep* for want of subjecting themselves to that Spirit and Power, which would give all strength, if they kept in it, and preserve all in God's saving health, and with a good Stomach to that which is good, and for Food, if they did wait for it, and keep in the Spirit and Power of the Lord God, this would rouse up and awaken all careless and sleepy Virgins, that want Oyl in their Vessels and Lamps, who have not their Lamps trimmed, nor are ready when the Bridegroom comes; Beware ye sleepy, foolish Virgins, lest Mid-night Sleep come quite upon you, so that the Cry of the Bride-groom's coming be before you are prepared for him, or the door of entrance in with him be shut against you, or you prepared for his entertainment; the sloathful Servant being apt to delay the doing of his Duty to the Lord, imagines that the Lord delays his coming, then he doth that which he should not do; and so causeth his Lord and Master, that is full of Mercy and Love, to be angry with him, and reward him according to his Deeds.

Dear Friends, therefore love the Cross of Christ, whereby you will learn to take up your daily Cross, and follow your Captain Christ Jesus, the Captain of our Salvation, that endured the Cross, and despised the Shame, and was made perfect through Suffering; follow him in the Cross, as you desire to have the Crown; despise the Shame of the Cross, and endure it, and do

not shun it, for you will not be as *David*, nor witness *David's* House to be as God's, if you shun the Cross, nor will you grow stronger and stronger, as you ought, if you are troubled at the shame of it; you will never deny your selves much for Christ if you shun the Cross, or be amazed at the daily taking of it up; whilst 'tis so with any convinced of God's heavenly Truth, they will not shut out the world's Spirit, Words nor Actions, but will be lusting after the world's Words, vain Fashions, Wayes, and not come out into a clear separation from them, nor be capable to bear witness against the World, nor their Words, Wayes, vain Fashions and Actions that are contrary to the Lord, and whereby his holy Spirit is vexed from day to day, such amongst us that will not cross their own Wills, and unbridled Tongues, to speak *Thou* to any single Person, high or low, but give way to a worldly and fleshly Will, and fleshly Desires, will not be willing to follow the Lord and his Servants, the Prophets and Apostles in their true Language, which was used by them that writ and gave forth the Scriptures, from *Genesis* to *Revelations*; and can such be now good? or is their Religion good? who have been long convinced and come amongst us, that have not a Bridle for their Tongues, nor do not know the Power of God's Truth, professed by them, to tame their Tongues; Why are some in this estate, anciently convinced, but because they would not subject their worldly corrupt Wills to God's holy Power, which would have made them willing so to do, and would have made them willing to have left all for Christ, and to have suffered the loss of all things, though it had been never such a Darling-beloved, for Christ's sake.

So let every one leave and forsake all which the Lord hath called you to forsake, whether it be *Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Lands* or *Living*s, and come to that whereby the laying down of a man's own Life may be made easie, which a Disciple of Christ ought to do, when called of God thereunto: And as you all keep in the Cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, you will be preserved in a pure separation from the whole World that lieth in Wickedness, and are Ungodly as the old World was, which God destroyed by Water; and you will be Preachers of Righteousness (as righteous *Noah* was) by

a righteous Life and Conversation, which will speak more expressly, and have a louder cry in their Ears than *Noah's* building the Ark had, although that had a speaking in it, if the old World had not been dull of hearing, and closed their Eyes, they might have heard God's speaking Voice, and have seen his Providence in it to preserve *Noah*, and his Righteous Family; though they were but few in number, God saved them, and preserved them in the Ark, which *Noah* was a building before the Flood came and drowned the Ungodly old World; and he will not spare the Ungodly World now, but till their Sins be full, and they ripe for a Deluge or Destruction, and then it will come upon them, and overtake them before they are aware thereof: and now many are uncircumcised in Heart and Ear, and will not be warned, nor take notice of God's hand that is lifted against them.

Friends, take heed of mixing with the wicked World, now have no fellowship with them, nor their works of Darknes, for as you are the Children of the Light, and of the Day, what fellowship can any of you have with Darknes, or the works of the whole World that lieth in Wickedness? or how can you touch with them in their corrupt Communication, Wayes or Worship, or any of their unclean and polluted things, but rather reprove and rebuke them that are found therein: And keep true and faithful to the Lord God, who called you out of the World, and seperated you from the Kindreds of the Earth, to stand for God, and to be living Witnesses against the Devil and all his works; and you are called of God to stand with the Lamb, and his faithful followers, against the Devil, never more to joyn with the Devil, or take part with his prophane, ungodly Followers in their Sins and Trespases, nor in their Wrongs, Oppression and Cruelty, nor contribute any strength to them, stand clear, and in a pure and spiritual separation, from all that which God's holy Spirit and Light condemns and judgeth to be evil, and contrary to the Light, Spirit, and Grace of God; give not way to that, to save the world, or its Favour; temper not with the Snares nor Baits of this World, but in the hour of Temptation keep low, waiting upon the Lord God, who knows how to save & deliver you, and mightily

tily to succour you when you are tryed, and to preserve you out of the power of your old Adversary, or any of his Snares, Baits or Temptations, God hath by his Light let you see what you ought to chuse, and what you ought to refuse; chuse the good, cleave to the good, whatever you may go through or suffer for so doing, chuse Life, that you may live forever; and how few or many soever your dayes may be in this World, refuse the evil, and the wayes of Death and Destruction; whatsoever hath not the mark of Truth upon it, as to Way, Worship or Religion, refuse it, and enter into no Consultation with the Devil, or his bad sensual Reasoning, which he will fill them with, that desire and consult wayes to conform in this or the other thing relating to Faith, Religion and Worship, which never was, nor is of the Lord; and when the Wind bloweth high, Rain fall, and Sea rage and foam, then especially look carefully and diligently to your standing, and look to Christ Jesus the everlasting Rock, that is higher than you, and higher than the Heavens, and who is the author and finisher of your Faith; all steadfastly look to him, trust in him, fear him, and think upon his Name, and still remember that the Lord God by a mighty Hand and Arm stretched forth, brought you out of *Egypt* spiritually: Do not forget that we were once Bonds-men in *Egypt*, nor how the Lord brought us forth, and the eminent Hand of the Lord that appeared in our deliverance and freedom from *Egypt*'s hard Task masters; and the Lord did redeem us from the *Heathen*, and their *Heathenish* Words, Fashions, Wayes and Worships, never to learn their Words, Wayes, Fashions or Customs any more: And God called us out of *Sodom* spiritually, and to leave the filthy Communication and Conversation of the *Sodomites*, which we were never to look back upon any more; truly 'tis very dangerous being in *Sodom* and *Egypt* spiritually, where our Lord was crucified; who can expect any thing but Ruin and Destruction to be found amongst them that now declare their Sin as *Sodom*? Therefore let none of you go into *Egypt* again for any help, or think to have relief there, go not down thither, nor look back towards *Sodom*, lest you perish, or be found worthy of the Wrath and Displeasure of Almighty God, by reason of going back into *Egypt* again, and then any
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of you should be found in *Sodom* or *Egypt* spiritually ; for if there be a desire in any to go back, and they draw back, God's Soul shall have no pleasure in them ; and God will be displeased with you that lust after *Egypt*, or the *Flesh-Pots* there, or any thing you were called of God to leave and forsake, when you came out of *Egypt*, notwithstanding a Sea of Troubles, and many Hardships may appear, yet still resolve in the Power of the Lord to go forward, and with heavenly delight follow the Lord fully ; and look still to the Lord, and not at any Hardships or Difficulties that may appear in your Journey, nor at the length of it neither : O ! let none of you say, that Food which God hath given you from Heaven is light Meat, for that evidently bespeaks murmuring at the Food which God gives, whereof you have eaten with us ; If any shall be filled so with unbelief, to slight that, and desire *Egyptian* *Flesh-Pots*, and begin to value that again, which you vomited up as unsavoury, and not good Soul's Food, and return to it again, sad will the latter end of such be, whatever their beginning was : And if any of you should forsake the Lord, his Fountain of living Waters, and dig to your selves broken Sifters that will not hold the living Water, then a terrible day of Wrath, and the great Displeasure of the Lord will come upon you, and so you may become Monuments of his Displeasure, which to avoid, wait upon the Lord low in his fear, when you come into the Assemblies of the Righteous, and earnestly desire that this Heart of Unbelief, whereby some in all Ages departed from God, and went backward, and not forward, may not be found in you, resolving for the future, in the fear, awe and dread of the Lord God, to cleave to the Lord, and follow the Lord in the doing of that which is good, and to keep out of Disobedience, Sin and Evil, while you abide in this world : Come not to the Meetings of the Saints, as if it were a thing indifferent whether you came or did stay at home, such luke-warm Hearers and Professors of the Truth amongst us, God will spue out, that are neither cold nor hot, and yet cold enough towards that which is good, the day is at hand that will manifest every Birth, every Tree, and every Spirit really as it is, unto all who witness the same
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measure of the heavenly Birth, or are Trees of Righteousness, and who are of a right Spirit.

Dear Friends, give not way to that, to please your selves, or to gratifie the Devil, or any corrupt Men or Women in the Spirit of this World, which would intice you, or draw you thereunto, that you might be ensnared, and then such will but sport themselves, to see any of you speak, act and walk after the course of this World, as such as would draw you into evil, do; but be not you like unto them, nor learn any of their wayes, for the wayes of evil men lead from God, and from his pure and precious Life, which he hath made manifest, and brought you into in measure; so be the more circumspect, diligent and watchful; watch you in all things, that you may please the Lord, and endure Hardship and Affliction with God's called, chosen and faithful, when we are called thereunto, that as true and faithful Warriors in the Spirit and Power of God, we may all be kept together in one Spirit to the end: Oh! be circumspect every Son and Daughter, Servant and Hand-Maid, have your Eye in your Head; and if thy Eye be single, the whole Body will be full of Light, which tends much to the safety and preservation of the whole Body, and the faithful are the Body of Christ, and Members one of another, and must needs be sensible of each others suffering; can one Member suffer, and not the whole Body suffer with it? *Dear Friends*, keep to Christ Jesus, who is the Head of his Body, the Church, which he hath purchased with his own Blood; still mind the Head, and hold the Head, that you all may be kept living Members of his Body, purely knit together, and firmly united unto him, that you may be compleat in him, wanting nothing of that state which you ought to be in, as to a growing into him who is the fulness that filleth all in all: In your Assemblies diligently wait to feel his presence more and more, purely to refresh and comfort you, whereby more and more you will have living experience how good and safe a thing it is for them that fear the Lord, to meet often together, to wait upon and serve the Lord, and answer his will and requiring therein, whatsoever men may require contrary of us herein, we are to obey God rather than man or

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man's Edicts to the contrary, whereby many times Storms arise, and the Sea comes to be troubled. *Friends*, forget not how the Lord hath covered us and sheltred us, when former Storms and Tempests have been, and the Rain hath fallen, yea, when the Enemy hath come as a Flood, and the Floods of the Ungodly broke forth upon us in the Dragon's rage, to destroy the heavenly Birth, and that which was of God in us; how the Lord by his mighty Power, which is an unlimited Power, brought Help Salvation and great Deliverance, even when all other Helps failed, and stood afar off: I hope many yet living do remember, with Joy of Heart, how the Lord caused the Winds and Sea to obey him, and divided the troubled Waters where the Whore then did sit, and now sitteth, which was *Nations, Kindreds, Tongues and People*, all which the *Whore* sits upon; for *Nations, Kindreds, Tongues and People*, are all like *Waters*, rousing, tumbling upon Heaps, and are troubled, there is no settlement upon them, few knowing what they ail, nor why they are troubled so upon Heaps; but notwithstanding the Saints, who are the *Lamb's followers* must pass through these waters, and through the fire also; the Lord will divide the waters to make way for his *Israel* in this day; and though *Rahab* and the *Dragon* stand up in the way of *Israel*, God will cut *Rahab*, and wound the great *Dragon*, and whatsoever would stand up in his way to hinder his Work, shall be confounded, and fall before him; for strong is the Lord that judgeth the great *Whore*, and divideth the Waters wherein she sits, and who will give her Blood to drink, who hath long drunk the Blood of the Saints, and still thirsts after more Blood to drink about Conformity in matters of Religion, and the worship of God, but the hour of her Judgments is come, her Paint is seen through, and her golden Cup full of Abomination is clearly discovered, 'tis in vain for the Kings of the Earth to think to support or heal her; nay, she is not willing to be healed, but thinks she hath no need of any healing Medicine, and truly I know none for her (that is to be destroyed, and must certainly be destroyed) even that *false Church, mystery Babylon*, the *Mother of Harlots*, which hath called her self Christ's Spouse, but hath the marks and attire of an Harlot. My dear Friends, as God hath called you out of her, not to partake of her Sins & Abominations

any more, keep out of her, and stand clear of her Devices and subtil Strategems she doth now, or hereafter may make use of to draw ye from Christ Jesus, and the Church that is in God, to a House of Wood and Stone, which they that are in *Babylon* call a *Church*, and call to the Sons and Daughters of *Sion* to come to their Church, and receive the Sacrament, who are come to the true Church, which is in the only true God, and are living Members thereof, united to Christ Jesus our Head and Husband, and we need no other Head or Husband, nor need not come to any Church, but that which Christ is the Head and Husband of, from whom we receive of his living Bread, and Wine of his Kingdom; and his holy things are given to us by the Spirit that comes from the Father and the Son; and you know *Friends*, that whereas Christ said, a little before he went away as (to his appearance in the *Flesh*) *he would send the Comforter to his Disciples, which was the Spirit of Truth, to lead and guide them into all Truth,* promising them, that the Spirit should take of his, and shew it unto them, which as they then did receive it, we are made now certain Witnesses of it: So need not go to a House of Wood and Stone, called *Church*, and there sit amongst the corrupt, putrified company of diseased *miserable Sinners*, that are so much out of Health, that they have no whole part in them; what comfort can a healed Soul, or a sound mind have in coming or sitting amongst them? where one may sooner come by an evil Disease, than ever be soundly cured of any inward Distemper or Sickness; and you partaking of God's goodness, and his holy things at his Table, and having spiritual Fellowship and Communion with him, that is abundantly better than all the Bread and Wine which is outward, and will decay, given by impure Hands to such as communicate with them (as many times it is administered) without any Commission from God; and yet that we must by these Church-men be forced to come amongst them, and eat and drink unworthily with these unworthy Administrators and Receivers of that which they call the *Sacrament*, is certainly both Unchristian and Unreasonable, and very Unchristian-like, as the Administrators and Receivers of it, who would now compel us to eat and drink with them, will one day know to their Wo, if they Repent not in time; and we may justly deny such as

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for their Bellies sake, without any authority from God, presume to take upon them in a rude unchristian manner, three times (with the same Mouth that they bless God and curse Men) to admonish us : You that are taught of the Lord, and have received his Counsel and spiritual Admonition from him, have learned of him to admonish one another, and know them that watch for the Soul, from them that watch and lay in wait for their Prey and dishonest Gain, *whose God is their Belly, and who glory in their shame*, who hunt you into their Courts to fleece you, and feed themselves with the Fat, and cloath themselves with the Wool, which they obtain by making you and yours their Prey, in spoiling of your Goods. But dear Friends, let none of these things (that are at present, or things to come) be able to move you from the peaceable Habitation in the Life and Power of God, to which you are come, and have been kept living Witnesses of ; fear not, neither be at all dismayed ; consider whose the Earth is, and who hath Power to give it when and to whom he pleaseth ; for it is not the Devil's, nor his Servants ; Man is but as a Tenant of it at the will of the Lord God, who hath given us that great gift, his Son, shall he not with him freely give us all things ? And be patient and rest quiet and contented, although you should be fed with the Bread of Affliction, and Water of Affliction for a season ; and that shall not be, unless God see it convenient for us : let this still comfort you, *the beholding of your Teacher near you, that cannot be removed into a Corner* ; and feel God's covenant, which is everlasting, that he made with David, in all things well ordered and sure (said David) although then God made it not to grow, he had a sure Hope, and doubted not of the growth of it in God's time and appointed season ; *And the Vision was for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak*, the Prophet said, wait for it, it will surely come, and will not tarry. You tribulated Followers of the Lamb, that are come to stand with the Lamb upon Mount Sion, never regard the high looks nor threats of them of Babylon, Sodom or Egypt, although they may hate you, and cast you out for his Name sake, in whom you have believed, God will make them blush for shame for their high looks, for God will smite them that threaten your Ruin and Destruction, and their designs God will discover, and confound them, before they be put in execution

execution as the Wicked desire, *whom the Moth shall eat as doth a Canker, and the Wind shall drive them away like Stubble*, & the Righteous shall see it, and rejoyce over *Babylon*, when her Merchants, and them that traded with her, *shall howl and lament, for Widdowhood, Sorrow and Destruction shall come upon her in one Hour*; and 'tis greatly dangerous to buy any of the Merchandize of this great Whore and false Church, that would force to their Church, Religion and Worship, such *that believe it, cannot make them better, or do their Souls any good*: What Church but the *false*, will by *Prisons* and great *Penalties*, endeavour to make them come to their Church, that are not of their Church, nor Religion, neither do believe that God ever required those Forcers, to force any into their Church, nor require them, whom the *Compellers* summons to come amongst them? These methods will not do to convince Conscientious Persons of any differing Religion, to come to that House of Wood and Stone.

Now, *dear Friends*, you may perceive the Beast would have all, small and great to worship him; how doth he seek to compel People to worship him, and receive his Mark, either on their foreheads or in their hands? and the cry is, *Who is like unto the Beast? and who is able to make war with him?* And none will be able to deny his worship, and refuse his mark, but the faithful tribulated Saints of the most High, that abide with *Michael*, our Prince of Peace, who will stand with and by the Children of his People, the sealed Ones, that have his mark on their foreheads, and utterly reject the Mark of the Beast, and deny it, whatsoever they may suffer for so doing. So, beware of the Mark of the Beast, freely reject and deny the worshipping of the Beast, and the receiving of his Antichristian Mark; for if any man worship the Beast, or receive his Mark on their foreheads, or in their hands, they shall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God, and be judged and condemned of him, and the Cup of the Lords Fury shall be poured forth for them to drink, without any mixture of his mercy or favour. Therefore, you Children of Light, and of Gods day, who have known that way so far to dawn in your hearts, as to have a discovery of the *Whore, Beast, false Prophet and false Church*, and have warred in the Lambs warfare, (against the Beast in any measure, and in the Light of the Lamb have seen and denyed the Whore

Whore and her golden Cup) still maintain your War in the Lambs Spirit and Power, against the Beast, and let your hatred be against the Whore & her Cup as much as ever; for the whore and her cup is no better now than when you first saw her, and began to hate her, and burn her flesh with fire, and her cup is the very same now, however she may guild it. I know God hath shewed, and will more manifest to you the Mystery of the great Whore that sits upon many Waters, Nations, Kindreds, Tongues and People, and he is willing to preserve you, and will keep you from adhering to her, or the beast on which she rides, and that carries her; if you will hearken still unto the Lord, and obey him, he will defend you from the cruelty of the great red Dragon, Whore, Beast and false Prophet, and will take the Beast, and with him the false Prophet, and give them to the burning flame. *He that hath an Ear to hear, let him hear.*

And remember how freely the Lord hath made you to drink of the Waters of Life, and how that water hath been in you as a Well springing up to Life eternal; and how can any of you that have known the waters of a full Cup, from God given unto you, (and to your great satisfaction have drunk thereof) return again to the foul and muddy Waters, that have no clearness nor life in them? Such as keep in the sence of that Life, and Waters of it, which Christ hath given us, I know will never again meddle with the corrupt foul muddy Waters which the Whore and false Church gives to her Children; but the Bread and Water of Life, which you have fed upon, and drunk of at the Table of the Lord, the Children of the great Whore know not; and therefore their cry hath been, *Come to the Church, receive the Sacrament*; if you do, you must pay for it, and if you do not, you must pay the more, and be cited to appear at Courts, which they call *Courts Spiritual*; but how carnally they act in keeping of them, and in proceeding against them that for Conscience sake towards God cannot partake with them, let all that fear God judge.

Oh! dear Friends, fear not the Wrath of man, though his heart be lifted up never so much in manifest Oppression, and threaten to act it upon you; but still know you, and believe, that the remainder of mans wrath, God will restrain, and disappoint the Wicked; cast not away your Confidence, but wait patiently upon

upon God, and he will restrain the Wrath of the Wicked Persecutors, that they will be confounded in their ungodly Proceedings, and not be able to effect their vile purposes: Depart not from the Faith which God hath given you, the Mystery of which is held in a pure Conscience; stand fast in it, then I doubt not but such will quit themselves in this day, through the Lords aid and assistance, from all the Snares that now are, or hereafter may be laid to catch and hurt the innocent, and betray the simple. So in the peaceable, pure wisdom and power of the Lord, keep over all the treacherous dealers, who set a trap to catch men, and who are full of deceit and flattery, and will speak you fair sometimes, as well as at other times shew their Teeth, ready to devour you, or eat you up; with the wisdom and power of the Lord God, keep out of them and over them; for their delight is in Mischief, to oppress a man and his house, but the Lord seeth and knoweth all the intents and purposes of the Wicked, with all their wicked works, and will reward them accordingly.

Do you see Clouds to appear and arise? remember it is said of Christ, *That he cometh with the Clouds*; and then should be a time of great Trouble, and how it should be a day of Darkness, and Clouds, and thick Darkness, and that covereth the Earth, and Nations; for so is the day of the Lord to the Wicked, its a day of gloominess and darkness, but not light: Now to behold Christ in the Clouds, how comfortable and glorious is it! but more glorious & comfortable to see him expelling of them, and causing the shadows of Death and Darkness to vanish away, which they do, and must do, as the Son, Christ Jesus, the Substance, comes into Peoples hearts, and is revealed in them. You that witness Christ so come, see him in the clouds, and how he breaks thorow the clouds, & driveth all away, that he may cause his day to dawn more in clearness. And Christ said, *Behold, I come as a Thief in the night*; blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, & men see his shame; it is not safe in a storm for men to be naked, without their garments that should cover them when distress cometh.

And now, a stormy Wind bloweth, dear Friends, be ye all watchful, and clothed with the garments of Praise, which God promised to give his People, instead of the spirit of Heaviness; and it will be

be a great Wo upon all them that have not the Spirit of the Lord to cover them with in this present Storm, and when distresses of Nations cometh, that are not, as good men and women, watching for the Lords coming, whether at Mid-night, Cock-crow, or when ever it be; *for the day and hour knoweth no man*; and Christ said, *In an hour when you think not, the Son of Man cometh*; therefore how are we all concerned to be always ready, and prepared for him, to serve, worship & follow him whithersoever he goeth? And Christ said, *When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find Faith on the Earth?* signifying the great loss and want of Faith, that shall be when he cometh, and what shipwrack will be made of Faith; notwithstanding I doubt not but this day of Trouble will be of great use unto all who are honest in heart, and have believed with us, and provoke such to examine themselves, whether now they be in the Faith or not, and truly to search their own hearts, and thorowly prove themselves; and so no doubt but all the Sons and Daughters of *Sion* will come out of the Furnace more pure than Gold seven times tried in the fire; & truly a thorow search, trial and examination will hurt neither the strong in Christ, nor the weakest of the Flock; it will, doubtless, be of great benefit for all to examine themselves whether they be in the faith or not; *for he that standeth, standeth by Faith, and liveth by Faith, and pleases God by Faith, and holdeth the Mystery of it in a pure Conscience; and worketh Righteousness by Faith, and stops the Lyons Mouthes, and escapes the edge of the Sword by Faith; and out of weakness are made strong through Faith, and valiant for the Truth, in warring against all that which works against the Truth, and is for untruth.*

And Friends, to be rich in Faith, such durably are made rich, and such may be instrumental in the hand of the Lord to make others rich, although they be poor in this World; for it is the poor of this world (rich in Faith) that are *Heirs of Gods Kingdom.*

So, you poor of the Flock, that honour God in your day, be content with such things as you have; nay, though you should have less, and be made as poor as any are, do not repine nor murmur in your hearts against God; do not thou say in thy haste, *Why is my Lot and Portion of this World so little, and so hard?* but mind thy being rich in Faith, and still look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of thy Faith, that hath made thee rich in Faith, and thou wilt.

wilt be as well contented with such things as thou hast, as them who are out of the Faith, though they be never so much increased with Corn, Wine and Oyl, or have this world's Goods in never such abundance; And if thou be'st poor and needy, consider the poor, distressed and stript estate of Gods innocent Servant *Job*, and by what he was upheld and kept from sinning against God; let the same Love to God be in thee, and the same uprightness and patience will preserve thy goings aright, and keep thee from murmuring when thou wantest many things that others enjoy. Thou knowest that *Dives* was rich, but *Lazarus* was poor, and was desirous of the crums that fell from the rich mans Table: *Dives* had his good things, but *Lazarus* his evil things in this world, a Beggar; the Rich man dyed, and the Beggar also; the Rich man was Wicked, and went into Hell, to be tormented in that Fire; but *Lazarus* was received into *Abraham's* Bosom, and was blessed and comforted with faithful *Abraham*, who is called the Father of the faithful. And you that are poor in this world, consider Christ Jesus, who in the days of his flesh had not whereon to lay his head, though the Foxes had holes, and the Birds of the Air their nests; and your heavenly Father knoweth what you have need of, and will let you want no manner of thing that he seeth good for you; be content that you are Heirs of Gods Kingdom, and that God hath promised you Treasure in Heaven; keep your Hearts to that, and prize that above all earthly, cankering, or the rusty Treasure of this world, and it will go well with you forever and evermore.

The Riches of this World, and all its Honour and Glory, that is uncertain, and takes to it self Wings and flies away; but we being rich in Faith and in good Works, that will abide and follow us, when we are gone hence, and shall be no more seen in this world; but the Riches of this world, and its Delights and Pleasures will come to an end, & now are flying away from many whose minds were lifted up, and who were puffed up in their minds with it. And the Apostle said, Charge them that are Rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, who gave them all things richly to enjoy. And *Job* said, Naked came I into this World, and naked shall I return again; and that the Lord gave, and took away, and could bless the
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Name of the Lord: He thus said in his poor stript and distressed state; and the Love, Faith and Patience of *Job* giveth true contentedness now, and such as have it cast their care upon the Lord, and he takes care for them. And *Friends*, you that are rich in this World, keep your Minds out of it, or else it will become a snare to you; and your Table may become a snare, if you keep not low & sober in the use of these good things that you enjoy in this world; & although God gives you them for your welfare, yet they may become a trap; and if when they encrease you let your hearts after them, and let your hearts on them, undoubtedly they will prove so to you, as well as other People. Therefore keep low, and take heed to your selves, that the Earth get not over you again to oppress and burthen that Seed of God in any of you; for then you will begin to walk heavily on, and pull back your Shoulder from many good works and services that you might do for God in your day, and will neglect the doing of them; and if (when Riches encrease) you set your hearts on it, it will steal away the hearts of such from the Lord, then what availeth any thing of a drawing near to God with the Tongue, or Lips, or any Bodily exercise, that you may be exercised in; For in this state Pride and vain Glory creeps in, and a desire after the Glory of the World, and a love to it, and to deck themselves very unbecoming Truth professed and talked of by them, and to get into the vain Fashions and Modes of the world; because they have gotten more of it than others, they may think that they may get into fine Apparel, and needless things the world useth to wear; and so much of that which is needless and superfluous is worn by some, especially that are young, that it is a shame their Parents, that have the government of them, should suffer them in it.

So dear *Friends*, who are Parents of Children, wait diligently upon the Lord in his Light, that with his Light you may see betimes into the Natures, Inclinations and Dispositions of your Children, and have a watchful and good Eye over them, and their Inclinations; and if you see they are inclinable to that which is good, cherish that in them, if it be never so little, strengthen it, that more may arise in them, and they may more come to see and taste with you how good and gracious the Lord is; and be good Examples to them in words and actions, that they

they may hear gracious words from you, and behold your good Conversation coupled with fear, fear to offend the Lord, and fear to do any thing against his glorious Truth, and then you will shine as Lights among them and your whole Families, and amongst all the Children of men : But if you see your Children incline towards that which is evil, to Pride, vain Fashions of the World, or that they delight in the company of the Wicked, and in Sports, and that they evilly spend their time ; without delay, check and sharply reprove them for it, and endeavour as much as in you lies, to stop and restrain them there-from ; and stubbornness, high-mindedness and all manner of Evil, labour in the love and wisdom of God to break them from, and keep down in them. If any say, *What can I do ? God must do all.* I fear some amongst you have omitted your Duty on your part, to do as *Christian* Parents, under that pretence of God's doing all, and therefore do not train up your Children in the way of God, Truth and Life as you ought to do : But suffer them not to learn the corrupt wayes of evil Men and Women, and to chuse their wayes ; 'tis true, *God worketh all our Works in us and for us* ; but as he worketh immediately by his Spirit and Power in our hearts, he also worketh by Instruments ; and you in the wisdom and spirit of God are, or may become fit Instruments for God to work on your Children and Families by, and to reclaim your Children and Families from Vice and Wickedness, which you may see them incline unto ; If the believing Husband may save his Wife, and the believing Wife her Husband, that believeth not, then why may not you, as believing Parents, save your Children, duly watching over them for good, believing in God for them, and doing your duty to them carefully, and in God's heavenly wisdom ? And why may not you, your Children and Families be thus sanctified and saved from the Abominations of the times, and the Evil of the World, while you and they are in it ? If wholly you discharge your duty and trust, as Parents or Masters of Families ; and then if your Children or Servants, notwithstanding remain wicked, you will be clear, and their Blood will come upon themselves, or at their Doors. I doubt not but there are many Parents have a Godly care over their Children, and as Masters, and Mistresses or Dames have

a Christian care over their Servants and whole Family, to instruct them in the way of Righteousness, and that reprove and correct their Children, and their Servants, when they see them do that which is evil. But this is written in the love of God, as a caution to and reflection upon all who are negligent and careless amongst us in this respect, that all may come into a care of God's glory, and of their Children and Servants, that as much as in you lies, you endeavour to reclaim, and restrain them from Sin and Evil, and train them up in that which is good, that you all may be able to give account to God with Joy, when by him you may be called to an account how you have governed and ruled your Families, trained up your Children, counselled and advised your Servants, and what Examples you have been to your Families, whom God gave you the rule and government of here, a few dayes in this World. And you believing Husbands, who have Wives that believe not, love your Wives, and be very careful how you speak and act towards them, that no blemish may come upon the Truth by any unadvised words to your Wives, neither any unseemly carriages or behaviour, that if possible, you may gain your Wives, that believe not, to the Lord, and belief of his precious Truth. And you Wives, that have Husbands that believe not, speak and do likewise the same to them, that you all may be found Holy and Unblemishable in the day of God, that the unbelieving Wife may be sanctified by her believing Husband, and the unbelieving Husband by his believing Wife, loving and cherishing the good in them that believe not, whether Husband or Wife; but keeping clear of that which is Evil, never joyn with that which is Evil, for thereby you will not only hurt and darken your selves, but also harm your Relations, and strengthen them the more in that which is evil, and contrary to God, and make your Lives more uncomfortable. And all *Husbands* and *Wives* in general, live in Love, in the love of God, out of a pure Heart loving and cherishing one another, submitting your Hearts to God and his counsel in one another, as the Lord by his Spirit may move in any of your Hearts, so to counsel and advise each other therein, that you may be made to each other meet helps in the Truth, and helps in him to advance that in your Families, or in helps in Government in the Church

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of God: And *Children*, be subject, and in obedience to your Parents in the Lord, that you may please the Lord; for the stubborn and disobedient displease the Lord, and come short of the Blessing of the Lord, whilst so, I mean his Blessing in heavenly things, and often in this world and its things, they are not blessed to them, nor do not enjoy them in the blessing of God: Take heed Children, disobedience to Parents is a great evil, to disobey them and their Commands, being that which is good; Let none be high, or set not your selves against such Commands, if you do, God will punish you for it, and kindle his wrath against you; if your Parents command you to keep out of evil Company, and out of bad Words and Actions, obey them, or else it will be ill with you. Parents care being over you for good, will you grieve them, by rewarding them evil for good, and rebellion towards them, instead of esteem, honour and duty, which you owe to them, even so much as you can scarce do it enough? therefore diligently mind your Parents commands in the Truth, to observe and do them. And all you *Servants*, that are convinced of and own God's Truth, let God's fear be before your Eyes, and let his Truth guide and order you, and keep you, that you may be enabled by the Lord to discharge your duty in the place of a Servant, every one of you, not as Eye Servants, or sloathful and careless in your Masters business, knowing you must give an account to God for any evil in this respect done by you; and you ought to do, in all matters belonging to your place, as what you did and were concerned in, were your own; and you ought to perform business in your Masters absence, as if present, and shun all Cousining and Defrauds, and seek your Masters profit, and be obedient unto them, and subject to them in all their lawful and just Commands, that the blessing of God, and the good pleasure of your Masters you may obtain; do not despise or slight the commands of them, because they are Godly, or may bear more with you, & allow you more *just Liberty* than the wicked will do, for that would prove Wickedness in you, and incur their displeasure, which you may avoid if you be wise; and rightly consider your place and station, and do not strive unlawfully to get out of it; And take you heed what Words you use, and what Actions you do amongst your Masters Children; for your evil example,

example, doubtless, may do much hurt to Children, who many times are more inclinable to the bad, than that which is good, you being frequent with them, by your bad Words and Actions, may give great strength unto; incourage no corrupt Communication, nor provoke them to Laughter, foolish Jestings, nor any unseemly behaviour, to stir up the wrong part, that you and your Masters Children ought to check and keep down in each other by the Grace of God, which you all being taught by, will make them good Children, and you good Servants, and then the blessing of the Lord will rest upon you, whether Servants, or made free, and whether single, or in a married condition, wherein are the greatest Snares, Troubles and Incumbrances. And you that are single, be not over hasty to force your selves from that state, to change your conditions, (I speak this both to Friends, Children and Servants) wait the Lord's due time, and wait low in his fear in it, *that you may be taught of the Lord*, what to do, and not Sin against God in changing your conditons; and take heed of being unequally yoked; or marrying with the World, although they may be civiliz'd, and have established to themselves a Righteousness, which is not the Righteousness of God, which if you be not aware of, may beguile your Simplicity, and anger the Lord God, and grieve your Parents that waited for, and expected better things from you; so your Marriage will not be honourable, nor you and them (you make thus choice of) be joynd together in Marriage by the Lord: Therefore take heed of the World and the World's Spirit, which leads from God; for that will lead you to love the world, and to have an Eye out to the Riches of it in your choice, and the Beauty of their Daughters, that have not believed nor received the Truth: You Young Men will look out after, and may be you see some elder than you drawn by the spirit of this world into the same Practices, and you may strengthen your selves in that, which God never justified you nor them in, but you are both condemned for, when you come to the witness of God, and hearken to the witness of God in your own Consciences, that never consents to any unequal yoking, nor any thing else that is done contrary to God, by any amongst us, whether they be Young or Old, Rich or Poor, Married or Unmarried, God doth not justify, but he condemns

all bad Marriages, and other things, now as much, nay, more then in the times of Ignorance ; although he disallowed them ever since the beginning of this World, and forewarned the Holy Seed not to mingle themselves in Marriage with the *Heathen*, and commanded them to keep themselves Pure, and to be Holy, with this caution, *I the Lord your God am a Holy God* ; but they not regarding the command of the Lord, and taking to themselves Wives of all sorts, thereat God was grieved, *And it repented the Lord that he had made Man*, when he saw the provoking of his Sons and Daughters, and he said, *I will cut off Man and Beast from the Earth*. So, all you Unmarried, whether Young or Elder, that are convinced of God's Truth, and come amongst us, look to the Lord in your proceedings in Marriage, wait low and enquire of the Lord first, whether it will stand with his honourable Truth, and be an honourable Marriage, that you have a mind to effect and bring to pass, yea or nay ; and if in answer from God, after patient waiting upon the Lord in it, you find that it will be to the honour of the Lord, and with the consent of your Parents, go on, and the Lord will be with you, and will direct, guide and bless you in your undertaking, which is of very great weight ; but if after a deliberate waiting upon God, you find not the Lord with you in your purpose and design, but that his Hand is against you and your purpose, then stay and give it up, and be not discontented, and hastily carry on the matter in your own wills ; nor let not your fond, foolish Affections sway you so, that you may become Captives to them, or the Will and Lusts of the Flesh ; for then God's safe counsel will be hid from you, and you will run on in your own Wills averse and opposite to the will of the Lord in that weighty concern, whereby some dishonour the Lord, defile their Bed, grieve and make sad their Parents, or them concerned, as left in trust with them, and endanger their own Ruin, both as to Soul and Body. So *dear Friends*, whether Young Men or Maidens, or more Aged, that may be concerned in this weighty matter of Marriage, consider these things, do nothing against the Truth, but look to the God of Truth, give up your selves to be at the Lord's dispose and ordering, and he by his heavenly Wisdom will preserve you out of the Spirit of this world, and out of all the Ways,

Wayes, Works and Snares of it. And you Parents of Children, give no encouragement or strength to your Sons or Daughters (that are owned by us, or in the profession of Truth with us) to Marry with the worlds People Sons or Daughters; keep your selves clear of such mingling and Marriages, that are out of the Truth, which you cannot, nor your Children, expect comfort or Gods blessing in; let no Earthly end whatsoever prevail with any of you, to connive at, or encourage such things in your Children; for if so, thereby will the worlds Spirit creep into you, as well as it hath done your Children that so proceed, and may darken God's counsel from both you and your Children, and hinder Gods blessings from your Families, and let in the curse amongst you, and bring his displeasure upon you and yours, and that is a woful thing. *God Almighty lead, direct and guide you all in the things that concern your everlasting Peace, which you are come to know and understanding; but the Wicked of the World know them not; and so in the day of the Lord you will be more inexcusable, (acting against Knowledge) than such will be that have not known those things:* So be ye all diligent and watchful, that you may be kept out of the World, and the Evil thereof, and keep God's holy Will and Commands all the days of your abiding in the World. And you Masters, Mistresses or Dames, behave your selves in the fear, awe and dread of the Lord in your respective Families towards your Servants, instruct and inform them, as God your Master in Heaven, by waiting upon him, will give you Wisdom to do it, which Wisdom will direct you how to speak and act towards them, as such that know they have a Master in Heaven, even so carry and behave your selves in your duty & places to your Servants, forbearing threatening in any words you say to them, that whether your Servants believe, or be such as believe not, you may by your good Communication and Conversation reach the good; and answer Gods witness to them, and to put no stumbling blocks in their way, whereby to cause them to stumble, by *hasty, rash, unadvised Words, that savour not of God, nor cometh of him that called you;* you being kept in the fear and dread of your Master in Heaven, will have true and peaceable wisdom given you, to carry your selves in your Families; so that the Truth will not be reproached, nor its way spoken evil of justly by your occasion, and that greatly tends to the honour of the God of Truth, and increase his wisdom and counsel to order your own Household or Family well, & will bring blessing upon them. *And I could not be clear in the writing of this Epistle to you, but to put you in mind of these things that are good to be known and practised in every Family, which had I not seen a neglect of in some, there would have been no need of.*

And My dear Friends, that have transported, or may transport your selves or Families beyond the Seas, out of your Native Country, consider and

and throughly weigh your aims and ends therein, that they be such as you may expect God's blessing in, and without seeking great things to your selves, or set your Nests on high, lest you fail in your expectation, and bring much Sorrow, Trouble and Exercise upon your selves and Families; from the richest to the poorest of you, seek Gods honour, and keep in his Counsel; wait low that you may enjoy Gods counsel, & stand in it where-ever you are; for that is certain and safe, and will direct you certainly and safely, if you wait to be ordered and guided by it; and that as you keep in it, will bring a blessing to all the Countries where-ever you may be dispersed, and bless your Undertakings where you Plant & settle your selves; but whether you who are gone already, or such as intend to go out of the Land, follow not your own wills, or fond weak affections in going into forreign Countries, or because this or the other Person goeth, and may have a share in Government there; consider, it is a weighty thing for one Person to remove out of his Country afar off, and his way clearly he sees not, perhaps neither; and if so, its not only a weighty, but a dangerous matter to remove a whole Family for favour and affection; and affection not well governed may lead a man or woman far into things they have not a right understanding, nor clear sight in, whereby some miss their way in their undertakings, which brings trouble, vexation of Mind, and discontents; not that I have any thing against any Person or Family going to settle themselves or Families, or to plant in any Country, that go in clearness, as to God, and singly mind his Honour and Glory more than any thing else besides, that is visible; for I know the Light of Gods countenance will blessedly shine upon such where-ever they are; and they will not go in their own Wills, nor be swayed by foolish Affections to run into things, or do things hastily, nor will or run in a heady mind in their undertakings, but will patiently wait upon the Lord, not only to know the mind and will of the Lord, but faithfully give up to do it, whether here in *England*, or any other Country; and such dare not remove themselves nor Families, but as they feel the Lord to countenance them in it, or have real & true freedom in the clear Truth of God, which leads us out of, & carries over all worldly aims and ends, and seeking, giving or receiving any earthly Honour which is judged of the Lord God, and gratifieth only that worldly part and spirit that leads into it. And *Friends*, all of you, be sure you neither had nor have in your hearts any secret reserve (to save that which ought to be freely given up) in your *transporting* your selves; for where-ever that is, it ariseth from Unbelief and carnal Reasoning: And if there be any of you that have left the Land, or shall hereafter leave it, that shall do it to save liberty, estate or life (which I doubt not but you might have *temptations* to in your undertakings) certainly that will not be well; you may be in danger and jeopardy there, as well as we here:

And

And by any particulars giving way to that here or there; they will thereby not render themselves less capable to bear or keep up their Testimony for the Lord as all ought to do. Truly my hearts desire and Prayer to God for you is, *That you may be saved out of the many Snares and Dangers that may attend you there, as well as me your Friends and Brethren here left behind you; and that you with us may be kept forever to God, that we all may answer the Witness of God in all People, Nations, and of what Tongue soever; and it will be so, we keeping in Gods fear and wisdom, and never departing from him or his counsel; hereby shall many Nations be converted to God, from their Idolatrous Ways and Practices.* And come out of all whatsoever is Evil and contrary to the Lord God, and so *Friends* will you with us, and we together with you in one Spirit of Love, Life and Power be preserved out of the many Snares and Temptations to such things as would dishonour God, grieve his Spirit one in another, or be any occasion of stumbling to them that will watch strictly over both us & you, that in all things we may so behave our selves, that the holy Name of the Lord, known and professed by us, may never be reproached or blasphemed by any of our Adversaries. Walk wisely, and behave your selves in tenderneis and lowliness of mind towards the *Indians* or others, whom you may have occasion to deal with, as you would they should do unto you; and cease from Anger and Wrath in conversing with them, that you may answer the just Principle of God in People of all Nations, which you may be concerned with, that we may hear of your welfare and steadfastness in Christ Jesus, that the Lord may be with you, and bless your Undertakings, is sincerely the desire of my Soul. And my dear *Friends*, in general, that love and fear the Lord, whatsoever things are good, pure, honest, that are of a good Report, or which have any virtue in them, think of & heartily put in practice, without being offended at the least thing or things that really are of God, and which he appears in, and bleseth his People in the Practice of. Oh! be of one accord and one mind therein; avoid all corrupt Reasoning and needless Questions about such things, as becometh Saints; and avoid all Evil Speakers, Whisperers, Back-biters and Tale-bearers, who thereby would cool Brotherly Love, or make Discord, & divide the Body of Christ Member from Member, to lay waste Gods Heritage, and trample upon his pleasant portion: In the fear and wisdom of God keep, that you may be made capable Instruments to stop such evil Instruments, and whatsoever is bad, impure, dishonest, and of a bad Report; And in the Life of Righteousness, and pure Judgment thereof, stand up for God as faithful Witnesses, against that which would defile and work Abomination, when and wherever it would enter to hurt and spoil the Vines; for our Vines have tender Grapes, and the Lord of the Vineyard looks for Grapes from his Vineyard, but will be displeased with sower Grapes, whosoever bringeth them forth: And shut out all *self-Interest*, & that which would lead you to respect Persons in Judgment, that nothing which is Evil may escape Judgment within in the

the particular; nor in such amongst us that do profess the Truth of God, whoever they be, rich or poor; and that the Righteous may be justified in Judgment, that an equal hand of true Judgment and Justice may still be born, and flow forth towards all of the Household of Faith, without respect to Persons. *God Almighty be with you all, and keep you in your strong Tower of safety, the name & power of the Lord, now the winds blow hard, and the seas swell; if any of you go out of the name of the Lord, into which you are gathered, and seek to save your selves without the Lord and his counsel, you cannot be safe, what counsel beside forever you take: Therefore keep with the Lord in his name, light & life, & he will be with you to save & deliver you out of the hands of all your Enemies, but do not prescribe the Lord a way, how to work deliverance or bring salvation, leave that to him that it belongs unto, the time and manner of his saving, and making bare and stretching forth of his hand; but stand fast in believing, be still, and know continually, that God is God, and by Faith in his power you will see such things brought to pass as your Eyes yet never beheld done by Gods almighty Power. Manifest your selves still peaceable, and quietly wait upon the Lord, who for the cry of the oppressed will arise, and his Arm will put on strength; he will help the poor and needy, and will have mercy upon Zion, and favour his People who eye him, and cast not away their confidence which you have had in his Power, and Gods everlasting Covenant of Light, Life and Power seal made with you, even the sure Mercies of David, and the bright and morning Star to direct you, and guide you in all your ways; that none of you may err or go astray any more. And remember Gods Covenant and Promise, which is just, that he made with David and his seed, which greatly comforted David in his afflictions and trouble; that his House was not with God, as it ought to have been; he thought upon Gods everlasting Covenant, he regarded that, and believed God would perform it in a time when he made it not to grow; and God said, As my Covenant is with the day and night, that there shall be day and night in their proper seasons so is my Covenant with David and with his seed forever; & David shall not want a man to sit upon his Throne from henceforth & forever and the Lord said, If I break my Covenant with the day and the night, that there shall not be day & night, then will I break my Covenant with David. But we see God continues his Covenant with the day & night, in their season, as in his eternal wisdom & counsel he appointed in the beginning, & set all thing in order which he had made; & the day & night ever since, according to Gods Covenant hath remained, and kept their order, even so God made his Covenant with David and his Seed. Therefore dear Friends, feel that you are all of the Seed and Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star, and feel and be sensible of his sure Mercies and Covenant with you, and extended towards you continually; and having received such Mercies and precious Promises, faint not, whatever may become of your outward Man or Estates in this world; freely give up all to the Lord, from whom you have obtained many favours and peculiar deliverances, when you were in great straits, and have been sorely beset with the Enemy within and without, how did the Lord then appear to stand by you, and strengthen you, when you had no other helper, nor looked for Salvation or strength in the day of trouble, from any other; certainly then was Gods time to appear, who then did confound your Foes, and stop and drive back the Powers of Darkness, that with good the Lords work, by his Power in you, and which he hath also begun in the Nations of the Earth, which he will carry on and prosper for his Names sake and Covenants sake, which in all things is well ordered and sure, in which God Almighty keep you and establish you all for evermore.*

*Alon in His prophesy, he latter 2 Your Friend & Brother who forever desires to be found one with
end of the 11th Mon. 1682. & the faithful in every good word and work. JAMES PARKER*

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